

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED POSS DUPE

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 SAM-01

OES-05 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 ACDA-10

NRC-07 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 /131 W

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R 101113Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1667

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

VIENNA 072

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS PRETORIA 1257

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY: VIENNA FOR IAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH SF

SUBJ: VORSTER ANNOUNCES SUCCESSFUL STARTING UP OF PILOT

URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANT.

1. PRESS REPORTED 7-8 APRIL THAT SOUTH AFRICAN PILOT URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANT AT VALINDABA HAD GONE ON STREAM AND THAT PRELIMINARY RESULTS INDICATED UNIQUE SOUTH AFRICAN ENRICHMENT PROCESS HAD LIVED UP TO THEORETICAL PREDICTIONS OF COMPETITIVENESS WITH ESTABLISHED ISOTOPE SEPARATION METHODS. IN ANNOUNCEMENT IN PARLIAMENT ON 7 APRIL, PRIME MINISTER B J VORSTER SAID THAT PART OF THE PILOT PLANT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PUT INTO OPERATION AND THAT SOUTH AFRICA COULD NOW GO AHEAD WITH UNCLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

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LARGE SCALE PLANT AIMED AT MARKETING LARGE QUANTITIES OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES. VORSTER NOTED THAT " THE TRUST

PLACED BY SOUTH AFRICA IN ITS NUCLEAR SCIENTIST HAS BEEN COMPLETELY VINDICATED" BY THE TEST RESULTS. " THAT THIS ACHIEVEMENT COULD BE REACHED WITHOUT ANY ASSISTANCE FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES." HE SAID. " INSPIRES ENORMOUS CONFIDENCE OF THE FUTURE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY."

2. DERRICK DE VILLIERS, CHIEF OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN ON MINING AND ENERGY, STATED THAT APART FROM THE HIGH SCIENTIFIC MERIT OF THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ENHANCE SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY AND PRESTIGE IN THE FIELD OF NUCLEAR AND ENERGY, " THE STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS ARE VERY CONSIDERABLE" DR VILLIERS ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS NOT AN INTENTION TO ENTER THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.

3. SPEAKING WITH THE PRESS FOLLOWING VORSTERS ANNOUNCEMENT MINISTER OF MINES PIET KOORNHOF REVEALED THAT A FULL SCALE ENRICHMENT PLANT COULD BEGIN OPERATIONS BY 1984 WITH FULL PRODUCTION ACHIEVED BY 1986. KOORNHOF ALSO DISCLOSED THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SA ATOMIC ENERGY BOARD DR A J A ROUX WOULD REVEAL AS MUCH OF SAS UNIQUE URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESS " AS IS ADVISABLE"

WHEN HE ADDRESSES A CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR ENERGY IN PARIS ON 22 APRIL.  
EDMONDSON

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